

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

Statement on United Nations International Day in Support of Torture Victims
June 26, 2009

Twenty-five years ago, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention Against Torture, and 22 years ago this very day, the convention entered into force. The United States leading role in the negotiation of the convention and its subsequent ratification and implementation enjoyed strong bipartisan support. Today we join the international community in reaffirming unequivocally the principles behind that convention, including the core principle that torture is never justified.

Torture violates United States and international law as well as human dignity. Torture is contrary to the founding documents of our country and the fundamental values of our people. It diminishes the security of those who carry it out and surrenders the moral authority that must form the basis for just leadership. That is why the United States must never engage in torture and must stand against torture wherever it takes place.

My administration is committed to taking concrete actions against torture and to address the needs of its victims. On my third day in office, I issued an Executive order that prohibits torture by the United States. My budget request for fiscal year 2010 includes continued support for international and domestic groups working to rehabilitate torture victims.

The United States will continue to cooperate with governments and civil society organizations throughout the international community in the fight to end torture. To this end, I have requested today that the Department of State solicit information from all of our diplomatic missions around the world about effective policies and programs for stopping torture and assisting its victims, so that we and our civil society partners can learn from what others have done. I applaud the courage, compassion, and commitment of the many people and organizations doing this vitally important work.

Categories: Statements by the President : United Nations :: International Day in Support of Torture Victims.

Subjects: Budget, Federal : Fiscal year 2010 budget; Foreign policy, U.S. : Diplomatic efforts, expansion; Terrorism : Terrorists :: Interrogation procedures; United Nations : International Day in Support of Torture Victims.

DCPD Number: DCPD200900511.